

Amendment increases funding to help wounded warriors who suffer from traumatic injuries

Washington, DC – Today, an amendment introduced by Congressman Tim Walz aimed at helping veterans suffering from combat related traumatic eye injuries was included in the FY13 Department of Defense Appropriations bill, which passed the House by a vote of 326-90.

The Walz amendment increases funding from \$5 million to \$10 million for core vision research which could improve the quality of life for our wounded warriors. It was added to the overall Defense appropriations bill with unanimous bipartisan support yesterday.

“The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have created a new generation of veterans that will need our support, not only in the coming weeks and months, but in the years and decades ahead,” said Walz. **“Many of these veterans are coming home after suffering from traumatic brain and eye injuries that greatly reduce their quality of life. After the sacrifices our brave warriors have made, we should do all we can to ensure they get the care they have earned and deserve when they get home.”**

Serious combat related eye trauma is now the second most common injury and trails only hearing loss. Today, penetrating eye injuries and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) related vision impairment account for up to 16% of all combat related injuries.

Congressman Walz believes we need to take care of those who took care of us. Research to effectively treat traumatic eye injuries can have long-term benefits, not just for a veteran’s vision, but also for their productivity and quality of life long after they have left the military.

Walz’s amendment received support from the Blinded Veterans of America, Vietnam Veterans of America, the Jewish War Veterans, along with the [American Academy of Ophthalmology](#) , the world’s largest organization of eye physicians and surgeons.

The FY13 Department of Defense Appropriations bill funds the entire Department of Defense. Among other things, the House bill provides funding for cancer research, suicide prevention programs, and family support advocacy programs. It also works to give our brave warriors, who risk life and limb on a daily basis, a raise in pay, and provides essential support to ensure our troops are protected and able to counter improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan.

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